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Suggestions For The Federal Government, by Gov. Dennis Daugaard:

Quite a bit of media attention was given to the recent debt-ceiling debate. It brought to mind some things that need changing, in my opinion. Long-term, to stop increasing the federal debt, Congress needs to change the way it does business. It needs to operate much more like state governments operate. Now, I don't like the federal government telling the states how to do things, and I imagine the federal government won't appreciate me telling them how to manage their affairs either. Considering that, I'll just call these a couple of suggestions.

I'm not going to write about a balanced budget amendment or the problem of allowing 41 percent of the United States Senate to block anything. Those are important changes to be made someday, but here are two easier changes that would go a long way to hold down federal spending and reduce the federal deficit.

First, in most states, the Governor has the power of the line-item veto of appropriations. If he or she doesn't want a certain appropriation of money to be spent, the Governor can veto one or more lines of the appropriation bill – without vetoing the entire bill. Those particular items of appropriation cannot then be spent unless two-thirds of the House and Senate override that line-item spending veto. Even the mere existence of that power holds down spending at the state level. The President, no matter to which political party he or she belongs, should have that same power.

As a second suggestion, prohibit bills that deal with multiple subjects. In most states, bills must be concerned with only one subject. In South Dakota, our constitution says it this way: *"No law shall embrace more than one subject, which shall be expressed in its title."* Those bills are discussed and debated, and passed or defeated, based on the merits of the one-subject proposal.

At the federal level, one of the primary ways to pass more spending is to attach the extra spending to a bill that most people agree must be passed. Consequently, many non-related appropriations or policies which increase the deficit are attached to the "must pass" bill. The extra spending occurs because that bill must be passed for other reasons. As a result, we have huge amounts of additional spending laws at the federal level that would not pass on their own merits, but are passed because they are attached to some other necessary new laws.

The federal way increases spending; the state way holds down spending.

To hold down spending and eventually start reducing the federal deficit, the President needs line-item veto power, and Congress needs to change its rules to consider policies and spending – *one issue at a time* – instead of adding non-related policies and spending to bills that must be passed.

Just a couple of suggestions.